



Potters Guild of British Columbia

1359 Cartwright St., Granville Island
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3R7
(604) 683-9623

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1991

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From The Vancouver Sun, Saturday Review, March 2, 1991, a reprint with Ann's permission, of a part of her article entitled "Cultural History as Fragile Art".

Choosing Clay demonstrates the vitality of ceramic art being made in the province.

At one extreme in this exciting exhibition there's Charmian Johnson's beautiful but serviceable bowl. This wheel-thrown vessel proves that the understated, oriental-inspired ceramics that typified B.C. pottery in the '60s have not gone the way of the macramé hanger. At the other, there's Jeannie Mah's sculptural object that's an unusable vase. Her paper-thin, hand-formed eccentric vessel is indicative of the more inventive approaches ceramists are employing in the 1990s.

In *Choosing Clay*, several artists have used ideas and forms taken from other media—for example, Kathryn Youngs' ceramic version of a Matisse-style still life and Lea Mann's homages to Chinese bronze ritual vessels. Appropriating forms from other cultures is a practice that crops up in all visual media these days.

But what makes the exhibition fun is the fact the *Choosing Clay* is really a series of provocative matings. Each of the show's

seven segments features a single work by one of the senior artists. As many as five more works show the direction of the emerging artist who has been selected as a companion. Like marriages or friendships in real life, these artistic dyads function by virtue of a magical combination of like and unlike traits, a chemistry best understood by the couple but subject nonetheless to outsiders' speculations.

Johnson's subtle, dark porcelain bowl sits among Jane Williams' colorful, pattern-decorated dishes; Sam Kwan's stoneware plate with its highly contrasting leaf motif is placed beside Lari Robson's austere neutral-toned containers. When Johnson chose Williams and Kwan chose Robson it was, perhaps, a case of opposites attracting. Yet, as you look more carefully there are commonalities, especially in attitudes towards serviceability.

In other instances the ceramics have compatibilities which in human terms might be described as "they have the same laugh or a similar turn of phrase." Hence you might feel that works by Mah and her exhibition companion Friederike Rahn are akin in grace of line and playfulness of form, and that Jim Thornsbury's sculptural zantness and desire for meaningful reference is reflected in Gary

Merkel's space age ceramics. You might even imagine, sometimes, that between the ceramists there is such a fine symbiosis that one could finish the other's sentence. Hence it is tempting to imagine that the grapes in Young's compote are related in the stacked stones of Connie Glover's ceramic sculpture, although that's certainly not the case.

Finally, the reputation of B.C. pottery is well served by the technical level of the works on exhibit here.

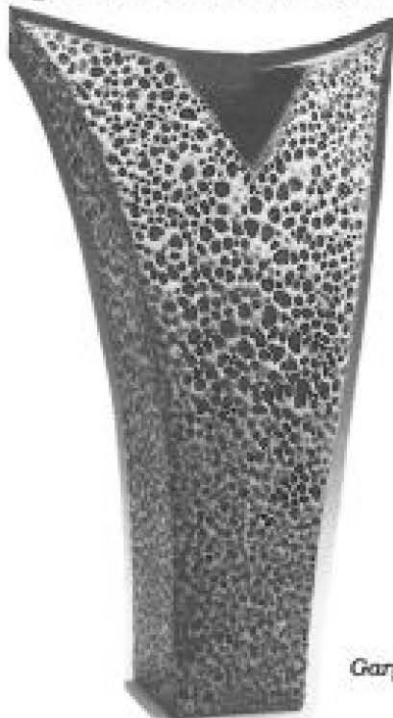
The clay in David Lawson's raku bowl looks like smoldering metal. The generous vessel fits into a narrow base that resembles a Mesopotamian gate. This pot, suggesting an ancient amphora, is pure magic. And so are Garry Graham's slab-built torsos that dance beside it. Their crater-glazed surfaces belong to this age and no other.

The show is a powerful incentive for other artists to consider choosing clay when searching for a contemporary medium with deep historical roots. It offers evidence that people who in earlier times might have been thought of as craftsmen are now considered artists in the fullest sense.

Ann Rosenberg



David Lawson



Garry Graham

GUILD MEETING

Thursday, April 18, 7:30pm
at 1359 Cartwright

Special Demonstration
with

Fredi Rahn,
participant in
Choosing Clay exhibition
and
1990 Studio 5 Resident

See page 2 for further details

Library will be open early

The Potters Guild of B.C. NEWSLETTER

is published 10 times a year as a service to the Membership. Submissions are welcome, and should be in the Guild office by the last Friday of the month. Material may be edited for publication.

Managing Editor: Jan Kidnie.

Editorial Committee: Bob Kingsmill, Hiro Urakami, Nathan Rafla.

Mailing: Jobst Froberg (labels), Savita Kshatrija, Gillian McMillan, Terry Saimoto.

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The Potters Guild of B.C. membership is \$20.00-individuals, \$30.00-groups, January to December. See application form elsewhere in this issue.

Potters Guild 1991 Board of Directors: Tam Irving, President; D'Arcy Margesson, Vice President; June MacDonald, Secretary; Dona Nabata, Treasurer; Rosemary Amon, Bob Kingsmill, Elwin Lowe, Nathan Rafla, Fredi Rahn, Terry Saimoto, Elsa Schamis, Debra Sloan.

Staff: Jan Kidnie, Guild Office Administrator, Coralie Triance, Manager, and Lea Price, Assistant, Gallery of B.C. Ceramics.

LIBRARY: Important Notice

Please bring any periodicals you have out back to the Guild library, as the plan is to put these publications into binders for easier storage. Such periodicals will in the future be available for reference only, as there has been considerable loss of periodicals over the years.

Fredi Rahn
Library Cttee

GUILD MEETING

At the next Guild meeting on April 18th, 7:30 pm, Fredi Rahn will show slides of her time at NSCAD, and the development of her work. She will also give a practical demonstration of how she builds her earthenware teapots.

We encourage you to come early, browse through the library, visit with old friends, and before the slide show and demonstration begin, to raise any concerns or ask any questions you may have about the Guild. As program coordinator for the coming year, I would very much like to hear of any ideas or suggestions you may have. A further workshop/demonstration is planned for June 20th. Mark the date on your calendar. Also see Ron Tribe's article on page 7.

Rosemary Amon
Program Chair

Many thanks to David Lloyd for his thoughtful article on the Paul Mathieu workshop, and also glad so many of you were able to attend. See Ron Tribe's article on page 7 for additional workshop possibilities.



AWARDS

Sixteen student applicants made submission to the Guild for the 1991 David Lambert and Olea Davis Memorial Awards. The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that **Pat Taddy**, a second-year student at Emily Carr College of Art and Design has been chosen as the recipient of the David Lambert Memorial Award, and **Steve Hook**, a second-year student at Kwantlen College, the Olea Davis Memorial Award. We hope to feature photographs of their work in the May issue of the Newsletter. Overall, the submissions were fairly uniform in quality, and the selections evening was a long one! A thank you to all of you who submitted an application, and congratulations to Pat and Steve.

June MacDonald, Secretary,
and Awards Cttee. Chair.



*Stick Figure
Man with Red Button*

Jim Thornsbury



Gallery of B.C. Ceramics
1359 Cartwright St. Granville Island
Vancouver, B.C. Canada
(604) 669-5645 V6H 3R7

GALLERY REPORT

Nathan Rafia's new work, entitled *Baskets for my Father's Bedside*, will be featured from April 9 to April 28th, with a "Meet the Artist" session on Sunday, April 21st from 12 noon to 4 pm.

Mary Daniels' new work will be featured April 30th to May 19th.

The Selections Committee will meet in April for its annual rejurying of work in the Gallery. The deadline for submissions for new work to be juried is **Sunday April 14th, 5:30 pm**. Six slides of recent work and a typed résumé are requested.

STILL LIVES

A collection of twelve figurative ceramic sculptures directed by the artist's interest in contemporary issues of the North American male.

By employing a new technical process of shaping clay, the artist creates lifesize male figurative studies which appear frozen in time—held in a stop-frame moment of their lives. While each is engaged in his active life, the absence of the figure becomes haunting. The shirts and pants suggest an anatomy, yet nothing of the person exists. Is he a hollow shell? a empty being? a person without substance?

From the age of two I was encouraged to be strong: 'Men must be strong, don't show your feelings, don't be a sissy, be a man.'

Rene Descartes' "I think therefore I am" is incomplete. It makes me one-dimensional. I think-feel therefore I am—this makes me whole.

Jim Thornsbury



Maureen Wright

EXHIBITIONS

The exhibition of the **XI Northwest International Art Competition For Crafts**, juried by Lois Moran runs until May 5 at the Whatcom Museum of History and Art, 121 Prospect St., Bellingham (206) 676-6981. See Kingsmill's Notes, page 4.

Capilano College: Clay & Textile Arts Program

Two student exhibitions will be held this year: At Capilano College, Rm. A117, April 22nd through 26th, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Information Meeting: A117, Tuesday, April 23, at 7:00 pm; and at the Vancouver Community Arts Council at 837 Davie Street, Vancouver from April 23rd to May 11th, Tuesday through Friday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Saturday, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Langara Fine Arts Department holds its Annual Open House and Student Exhibition from April 8th to 12th, 10:00 am to 9:00 pm Monday to Thursday, and 10:00am to 5:00 pm on Friday.

FIRED UP! CONTEMPORARY WORKS IN CLAY, May 25 and 26, 1991 at the Metchosin Community Hall, corner of Happy Valley Rd. and Metchosin Rd. Hours 10 am to 5 pm.

Pleasures of the Table is this year's theme of one of the West Coast's major clay events. The Fired Up group consists of Judi Dyelle, Pat Webber, Gordon Hutchens, Sue Hara, Gary Merkel, Alan and Meg Burgess, Dianne Searle, Art Brendon, Susan LePoidevin, and Louise Card. This year the glass artist Morna Tudor, Tam Irving and Sandra Millott will be featured guest artists.

RICHMOND POTTERS' CLUB holds its Annual Spring Sale at the Minoru Sports Pavilion, 7191 Granville Ave., Richmond, April 27 and 28, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

TABLE OF HONOUR EXHIBITION

The exhibition of the work of fourteen ceramic and glass artists, created especially for Government House in Victoria will be held at the Canadian Craft Museum, 1411 Cartwright St., Vancouver from April 4th to May 26th. The two prize winners have been announced in the most recent Western Living Magazine, with impressive photographs of Kinichi Shigeno's blue patterned, gold-trimmed porcelain place settings matched with Ted Jolda's Italian-styled goblets. Congratulations to all the finalists, in the ceramic realm, Susanne Ashmore, Suzy Birstein, Tenley Dahlie, Peter Flanagan, Freiderike Rahn, Rita Rowbotham, Kinichi Shigeno and Lu Wuthrich.

On which subject, we also congratulate Suzy Birstein who has recently won third place in the "All Boxed Up" competition on show at the Gardiner Museum in Toronto.

Shiatsu



*A Japanese massage
which encourages
balance.*

Astarte Sands 251-5409

REJECTION: A CASE STUDY

I would like to discuss rejection. Not the maudlin sort we all receive from relatives who confuse the concepts of love and control through our tender years prior to the quietude of middle age, but just the ordinary, everyday rejection we get from galleries/shops and exhibitions.

I decided to take a gentle stab at international fame and recognition. I don't know why. It didn't arise from the weariness that results from being ignored. It wasn't like I'd been in prison for years and craved a little positive feedback. It felt like a reasonable challenge, and it was close by. It was a juried show being held in Bellingham's Whatcom Museum for northwest American and southwest Canadian craftspeople.

You could send slides or take the intended three objects. It was to be juried by a single individual from the American East. I had three pieces I liked so I shot a roll of slide film of them. The film came back blank. Was this a hint? I took another roll and it also came back blank. Maybe some esoteric force was trying to tell me not to go for this show?

Never mind. We loaded up the old station wagon and headed south. Canadian Customs gave us forms to prove that any objects returning to Canada had actually been made in Canada, and were therefore duty free, - if they were not accepted, given prize money and sold to some rich clever individual who had just made a fortune in patriot missile stock.

We then went to American Customs. Any one of the officers might have, on a whim, shot to maim or disfigure: after all, they were at war in the Persian Gulf and could conceivably look askance at the kind of foreign invasion into the arts I represented. Fortunately, they were decent and straightforward.

The pieces were delivered on a Friday, juried Saturday, and on Sunday you were informed as to rejection or accept-

ance. There was \$1200 US in prize money. I had it spent before I phoned to see how the pieces were received. My mind acquiesced in humble glee at the prospect of being internationally acknowledged, recognized and possibly lauded. After more than 20 years with clay, a little international fame was not unnatural!

Well, it was not to be. All three pieces were rejected! Bloody hell. So the process was reversed; all expectations quietly erased from the mind, and all parades cancelled. I made another trip to Bellingham, picked up the pieces, bought gas and an "I Support Desert Storm" T-shirt from a pacifist friend, and returned to the studio to work.

This experience, not unlike rejection from the Potters' Guild Gallery, could be cause for bleak self-deprecation, depression or self-mutilation. But a healthier realization is that we're all in the business of acceptance/recognition every day as people tune themselves into our work. What I must do is go down to the Whatcom Museum, see the show, and observe the competition. Indeed, we are all competing, -but it's not a ruthless competition. It's one in which we inspire one another to make better stuff.

In two years I'll enter the same show and probably go through the same mental process, and I'll keep it up until they ask me to judge the show!

Bob Kingsmill

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

As a result of a letter from Eric Hettema, a note on availability of glaze testing laboratories

The CAN TEST Labs at 200-1523 West 3rd Avenue, Vancouver, phone 734-7276, may be able to help you.

A MEMORIAL

News of the death of Kybor Dancer on February 23rd has come to us from numerous sources, and I thank you all, - particularly Brian Brett from Saltspring Island who phoned to let me know and who has kindly written the following personal memorial to Kybor, or Fred Owen, as he was known to many of us.

It's not many of us who have the chance to learn under a master, someone who sets us loose on the world with technical skills as well as a sensibility toward our art.

I never had a master in the world of writing, though there are many writers I learned to respect. But I did have a master in my other field, the art of fire and clay. His name was Fred Owen then, and somehow, he lured me into his class, and gave me the clay. That was sixteen years ago.

At Douglas College, Fred had developed one of the best pottery schools in the province, if not the country. Hundreds attended; everyone learned their basics. There was no chance to wander in and just be an "artist". You had to know your glazes, your forms, and make sure you didn't scratch Aunt's table with a rough base, before you go to be "artistic". I can remember entire classes devoted to how a mug meets the mouth, or the shape of a handle and its encounters with human fingers.

There were some disgruntled ones: - those who thought they should be in an easy course to escape from the real rigours of Math or Physics. Pottery turned out to be one of the toughest sessions at the College. It was one of the few classes I could every enjoy failing, which I did regularly, so that I could take the same course again the next semester. There was so much to learn from Fred, I couldn't assimilate it all.

Meanwhile, he was producing his own work, sometimes rushed, sometimes crazy, and sometimes with deep thought. Fred could be infuriating and dazzling at the same time, and not everyone could see through him, or recognize the generosity of spirit behind his individualism.

I loved his freedom with his glazes, both in the way he used them and in the way he gave them away. He never believed they were treasured recipes to be concealed or hoarded. He gave them to anyone who asked, understanding that the potter will always shine through the glaze. And he was right. I look back at my own changes through the years, and how those glazes have become so different from their source.

Then it all came down. He lost everything. Job and home. One of the most awesome estrangements from lifestyle and career I have ever witnessed. He changed his name to Kybor Dancer, and freed himself to rethink life and clay. There was one last great show in Richmond. All white pots, strong-shouldered or faceted, some with a little cobalt blue brushwork. He didn't do much for a few years; then he started to come back. There was another white show this year: simple, beautiful pottery.

I could list his many achievements, his multitudes of show, his studies in Peru and Korea, his teaching record, his piloting of arts organizations, but in the end, they are not the Kybor I remember.

I remember him being goofy or cranky or fussy or brilliant (sometimes all at the same time). I remember his total aplomb as an immaculate teapot he'd made flew off the wheel during final trimming and crashed against a nearby wall. I remember the time he tried to help me with a particularly difficult vase that was too big for my simple skills, and collapsed it. He looked at me and the mud left on the wheel, all that remained of so much beautiful potential, and said, "I think we should call that a learning experience". I remember his easy joy while raku firing in the rain, and I remember his sadness.

I wish I'd bought that white vase that I'd always been meaning to buy from him. I never got around to it. Now, I'd like to look at it sometimes, and cry.

It's a sad sign of our society when our craftsman potters die, and it's not even mentioned in the newspapers. Kybor was one of our best and his passing should have been noted. Yet perhaps in some ways he wouldn't have appreciated that. Like Hamada, he just wanted to make beautiful pots, and pass on that skill to others.

Out of respect for what he taught me, I have decided to continue studying with him, and perhaps, in my small way, pay him some homage. I'll spend my next two years of high-fire work making white pots, maybe with a little cobalt blue brushwork.

Brian Brett,
Fulford Harbour

Ed. Note: Kybor's daughters have contacted many of his friends with a very thoughtful letter. A memorial service was held in Vancouver on February 28th, and it should be noted that his family have established a scholarship fund in his name. To contribute, contact Lesley Owen, 13530-24th Avenue, Surrey, V4A 2G5, or phone 531-6548.



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OPPORTUNITIES

Circle Craft 18th Christmas Market will be held at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre, on November 7-11, 1991. For applications and information to enter, contact Paul Yard, 101-1765 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, V6J 5C6, (604) 737-9050, Fax (604) 736-2186.

Terri Helt of Creative Craft Fairs presents Vancouver Island's largest art and craft fair "Artists in Action Festival '91", May 24-26, at the Racquet Club, Victoria. Also the 11th Annual Christmas Show, Nov. 14-17, 1991. Write 977 Kentwood Tc., Victoria, V8Y 1A5, or call (604) 658-2901 for application forms.

Entries are invited for the **Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award 1991**. The Award was established in 1977 in association with the Auckland Studio Pottery, and entries are regularly received from USA, Canada, England and other European countries, and Japan and Australia as well as New Zealand. Criterion: Excellence; no theme or category; one entry (piece, not slide) per artist. Awards: NZ\$10,000 for Premier Award; NZ\$1,000 each for up to 5 Awards of Merit, as well as further certificates of merit at the discretion of an International Judge. Entries are to be in New Zealand by **May 3, 1991**. Entry forms from Box 13195 Onehunga, Auckland 6, NZ.

Art Market '91, formerly Harrison Festival of the Arts. Now accepting applications for their annual juried craft sale, to be held on the weekends of July 3 and 13. Booth fees waived in order to encourage participation. **Deadlines for applications: April 26, 1991**. Submit slides of work, plus \$5 jury fee. Applications can be obtained from the Harrison Festival office at Box 399, Harrison Hot Springs, BC V0M 1K0. Tel: (604) 796-3664.

CABC Grace Cameron Rogers Scholarship — This scholarship is awarded annually to a practicing and/or emerging craftsperson to attend a recognized school or course designed to upgrade craft skills. This year, the award amount

is approximately \$1,500. Applicants should submit a résumé of their educational and/or professional background, description of selected courses, costs, etc. **Deadline: April 30, 1991**. Contact Gail Rogers, Crafts Association of BC, 1386 Cartwright Street, Granville Island, Vancouver, BC V6H 3R8, or tel: (604) 687-6511.

Professional Development Assistance Program — Available to professional artists or arts administrators who have worked professionally for at least two years. Candidates must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. Grants available, up to \$1,500. No more than one grant per year. **Application deadline: May 15**. For more information and applications, contact: Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture, Cultural Services Branch, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC V8V 2X4. Tel: (604) 356-1718.

WORKSHOPS/CLASSES

Paul Soldner Workshop—Fire By The Sea—September 23-28, 1991. Cost: \$615.00 (cost includes accommodation, meals and workshop). Location: Hollyhock Farm, Box 127, Mansons Landing, Cortez Island, BC V0P 1K0, (604) 935-6465.

Calgary Ceramics Seminar (APA) Ceramics International, **May 17-19, 1991**, presented by Leisure Learning Services and hosted at the Alberta College of Art. Contact: Kristen Abrahamson, Leisure Learning Services, 3rd Floor, Dr. Carl Safran Centre, 930 - 13th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2R 0L4. Tel: (403) 245-4944.

Metchoshin International Summer School of the Arts — June 23 to July 6. Twelve workshops and twelve instructors. 2 week or 2 day courses. Individually priced. Registration NOW. 384-1698 (Victoria).

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Craft Office
5163 Duke Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 3J6

or telephone
(902) 422-7381, ext. 207

A SUMMER TREAT

This summer will see my wife and I joining the jostling crowds at Vancouver Airport, craning our necks and scrutinizing each weary passenger, as they emerge from customs to face the final test of navigating the arrival barriers.

The last time we met an overseas visitor whom we had never met before, my perceptive wife picked him out right away. This time, our visitor is from Japan. Easy, you say—true; she may appear in a stunning kimono, glide towards us on her high wooden platform sandals, but since there will be many other Japanese visitors on this Tokyo flight, we have one clue—she may resemble her work.

It was during the visit of a friend who lives and works in Japan, that we first heard of **Yuriko Matsuda** and her wish to visit Vancouver and perhaps meet another Canadian ceramic artist. Gordon had brought along a few slides and copies of her shop invitations; we were hooked! Her work was interesting, very beautiful and surprisingly contemporary, in a way the relates to current North American trends.

Yuriko was born in 1943; her birthday is July 16th and she is arriving on July 13th. Anyone know how the Japanese celebrate their birthdays?

She received her B.A. from Kyoto City College of Fine Arts, and a graduate degree in ceramics, after further studies with Kenkichi Tomimoto, Yuzo Kondo,

Kyubei Shimizu in Kyoto and Tojiro Kitade in Kanazawa. She has exhibited in major centres across Japan and also internationally. She is currently preparing for her third one-woman show in Tokyo.

I am presently arranging studio visits for her in Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle. Through the Guild, we are organizing a one-day workshop, which Mary Daniels has arranged to be held at U.B.C., on Saturday July 20th in Rm. 1105, Dept. of Visual and Performing Arts, Scarfe Bldg. Fee for the session will be \$20.00 for Guild members & \$15.00 for students. So, cancel your holidays on the yacht, and delay your traditional holiday at the cottage. This is not to be missed!

If you are interested in meeting Yuriko, please contact me at 987-3916.

Ron Tribe

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- A deposit will be required.

For information, contact

John Pickering, 1359 Cartwright St. (rear) Vancouver, V6H 3R7, or phone 684-8452.(after May 4th).

- () Membership Application
() Membership Renewal
() Change of Address

Mail to:
The Potters Guild of B.C.
1359 Cartwright St.
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3R7

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